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pen of Dr. C. S. Sargent, published in the New York *Sun* of January third and reprinted by the author in pamphlet form, makes it necessary for us to say, in simple justice to the GAZETTE, that our article was sent to the printers on December 23 and the proof of it corrected and returned before we had seen Dr. Sargent's paper. The reader of the two will notice that the GAZETTE'S sketch is much fuller in its account of Gray's early life, while Dr. Sargent's contains a much more extended history of his botanical labors. Having both had access to the same source for our facts the two papers naturally agree closely in some points while at the same time they supplement each other.

THE EDITORS OF THE GAZETTE intend to make their June number one for collectors. This will include not only directions for collecting and preserving all forms of plant life, but all the details of herbarium work. Many specialists will furnish notes pertaining to their own departments, but this early notice is given, with the request that all collectors in every department and all herbarium workers send us notes concerning the collection, transportation, preservation, and final arrangement of plants. The coöperation of botanists will make this number a valuable collector's hand book.

THE PORTRAIT of Dr. Gray, which we published in our last issue, was made from a photograph taken in 1880. It was selected by Mrs. Gray from the numerous ones in her possession as being the best likeness of the Doctor.

OPEN LETTERS.

Some Variations.

In July, 1885, I collected, in Somerset county, Maine, several specimens of Botrychium matricariæfolium, in which the fertile segments were more compound than in the usual forms, and the sterile segments were smaller, especially narrower, and had sporangia around the edges. Curious looking specimens when compared with the ordinary forms beside which they grew.

In August, at Wenscott Reservoir, R. I., I collected a handful of Monotropa uniflora, one specimen of which had seven petals, twelve stamens, and a six-celled ovary; another had six petals, thirteen stamens, and a six-celled ovary. Several other specimens had some of the parts slightly multiplied, but not so much as these two.

Providence, R. I. — J. FRANKLIN COLLINS.

Botany at Harvard.

With your permission I should like to explain the statement made on page 397 of the GAZETTE for December, as I understand that some readers have been puzzled to understand why the cryptogamic laboratory of Harvard University is separated from the phænogamic laboratory and united with the zoological department, as appears to be the case from the statement in the GAZETTE. One of the elective courses in the college is called elementary biology, and in that course the rudiments of both botany and zoology are taught by the study of a few types, a plan pursued in several colleges of the country. This course is given in a large-sized laboratory at the Agassiz Museum, and the zoological portion is taught by Prof. Faxon, while it is my duty to teach the botany, which includes not only types of cryptogams, but also of phænogams. This is properly the biological laboratory so-called, and the cryptogamic laboratory is in an adjoining room, in which the large collection of thallophytes, together with an illustrative herbarium of higher cryptogams and phænogams, is deposited. In this room all the special cryptogamic work is done with collections and books at hand. During half of the college year general work on cryptogamic botany is taught at the laboratory in Harvard Hall. I am led to make this explanation lest some of your readers may otherwise infer that the botanists of Harvard believe in keeping cryptogamic botany distinct from phænogamic botany. The contrary is true, and no one would be allowed to take the courses in cryptogamic botany proper who had not previously passed a satisfactory examination in phænogams.

Cambridge, Mass. W. G. FARLOW.

CURRENT LITERATURE.

Revision of the Canadian Ranunculaceæ. By Geo. Lawson, Ph. D., LL.D. From Trans. Roy. Soc. Canada, ii, pp. 15–90. 4°. 1884.

In this extended paper on plants of a single order the author has treated very fully of the synonymy, description, geographical distribution and local occurrence of each species known to have been found in Canada. In instances where doubt exists respecting the validity of a species' claim to recognition, he has entered into a discussion of historical data in regard to it. This paper was preceded by a similar one published in 1870, and embodies the results of riper study, and the additional information secured through private collectors and the Canadian Survey. The extent of the labor involved in its preparation may be inferred from the fact that the index contains 418 different names of the plants embraced in the paper; of course including synonyms. The work will prove valuable to all students of the North American flora, and particularly so to those of Canada, for whom it is specially designed.

Dr. Lawson is author of a number of other botanical papers on the Canadian flora, especially in reforence to several rare plants, including Calluna vulgaris, Sedum Rhodiola and others.

Manual of Rocky Mountain Botany. By John M. Coulter, Ph. D., Professor of Botany in Wabash College. Ivison, Blakeman, Taylor & Co. New York and Chicago, 1885. 8vo. pp. 452, and a glossary.

This volume is one of a botanical series published by the above-named firm. Of course we expected to find the press-work, paper, and binding satisfactory, and the expectation is fully met. It is, however, in some respects unfortunate that so close a conformity to a style adopted years ago was adhered to.

It is to be hoped that we shall have a complete flora of North America from the master, who has so long had this great task before him. The continued influx of new species must make his labor appear like the hopes of Tantalus. A volume containing all our known species requires to be supplemented almost as soon as the printer's ink is dry.

To-day, no single book, or series of books, can be designated as the Flora of North America. It must be years before any such can be produced. It was a graceful thing on the part of Professor Gray to suggest the preparation of this Rocky Mountain Manual to Professor Coulter. *Truly it meets a want*; and will leave the dwellers in the region between the 100th meridian and the western slope of the Rocky Mountains, on one hand, and between the latitudes of Southern Colorado and British Possessions, on the other, without excuse for remaining ignorant of their own flora.